

We are planning an operation for handling organic meat from North Dakota to Florida. The plant has all the USDA and Organic certifications. The meat comes vacuum packed in boxes, which we will open to distribute the individual packages in the retail market directly to the end user. What certification do we need? One of the retail plans we have is through vending machines. Are there any regulations for the vending machine?

You may need to become certified as handler, once you open the packages and resell them. It depends on what you do exactly. Go to the NOP website @ <http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop> and click on "Certifying Agents." Click on the "List of USDA Accredited Certifying Agents," then choose either Domestic or Foreign to find the closest Certifying Agent to you. Once you choose a Certifying Agent, and contact them, they will be able to explain all the steps required for you to become certified.

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